Florence Sunday June 7th 1823

My dear Sarah

Some how or other I find myself sitting down to write to you - always when I suppose you doing [illegible] in Mason Court — that I may seek in my "minds eye" what has been my greatest happiness and wish to share God's blessings (once) again. — My dear friend Brown says - "we are the most loving family he ever knew - he makes me continually talk about you &c ——— My object in coming here is to finish my large picture - which will be my last work before I return. — I find all the Artist the finest - for times &c - perhaps I may stay and paint it here - it is a much nicer place than Rome in cleanliness and convenience of living - but this shall be determined by Brown - who is to be the master of the House for the rest of the time we are in Italy. - This is a comfort something like my dear, like you - for he is a noble and most generous hearted man besides very clever learned and versed in Literature

Florence we have fortified — he seems to think my

improvements since I left England very great — on my
arrival here I found Lord Byron and Mr Ireland
preparing to go to Greece to fight for the poor
Greeks — I have made 12 small pictures of them
in 2 days — and they were one and all delighted with
them — Brown says he never saw any thing done
in such style — and so quick

But my dear Sarah — pray excuse my
grossness of my Friends to me with these Men — my
object is my Painting and to his acquaintance I shall
be and have been much advanced — It is the
most fortunate of [illegible] to become acquainted
with these Artists — and so they go on and never
advance in their knowledge — owing to certain set of
narrow rules and certain jealousies — but here
I find Men of great minds, deeply learned in Art
and Nature — and only differing from me in their
knowledge our objects are the same — You greatly mistake
to think I should be injured by them — bad principles — we
never talk of but Poetry & Painting & Music — they
are Men of the first abilities by all the Artists they both are
come — but they would be deem'd Mad! or fanatics —
much I have gained from them — my knowledge has

been disliked of in their conversing and yet you found me not altered either in heart or sort - I tell you a Man must be but poorly grounded in his Object and principles to be moved by trifles - I think I know well how to gain any thing for my pursuits — any friends love - one and all may see I have conscience on my side - Let me alone to find out those friends who can serve me - I make a point never to know any one who is not superior to me in fortune or ability - or some way or other - But I may state the case by saying my duty and inclination in my present course. — Tell Jane this - though I ought not advise him - or even hint of my self him - for I think he surpasses me in all things. — God prosper him in his present course - This I still am sure of that to pursue a parcel of inferiors is the sure way to become vain and proud and selfish and keep backward from oneself —

The goodness of your heart to my dear Sister draws fresh tears from my eyes - I will pray to God that when I return it may be to repay you - and all to you by my misfortunes again - but the affection of our family does bear me - I make a point never to know any one who is not superior to me in fortune or ability - or some way or other - But I may state the case by saying my duty and inclination in my present course. — Tell Jane this - though I ought not advise him - or even hint of my self him - for I think he surpasses me in all things. — God prosper him in his present course - This I still am sure of that to pursue a parcel of inferiors is the sure way to become vain and proud and selfish and keep backward from oneself —

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The goodness of your heart to my dear Sister draws fresh tears from my eyes - I will pray to God that when I return it may be to repay you - and all to you by my misfortunes again - but the affection of our family does bear me - been made in virtues and therefore it will endure in happiness - to the which may God again restore me - for to this only one I look to. — You ask when I shall return - now this is a puzzler - my large Picture will take me all next year - but it must be all regulated by my health which now I have quite regained and with Brown's kind care I may hope to keep it - This long journey I have taken is a proof that I have gained

in strength — rather than lost — I have no cause to fear. But I shall be ill again since I have had such warnings to take care of myself — one must be assured I am quite well — and in high spirits — Yet you have made a great progress in your writing. So much so that I am almost ashamed to write to you about it in my own hand writing — but now I have begun to write sincerely I do hope to go on by it — I am preparing for a Magazine

[illegible] think from what you say in your letter that you are not quite well — and in high spirits — and that you have not yet begun to write — and that you have not yet begun to write — and that you have not yet begun to write —

Mrs. Stevenson

Edinburgh

Scotland

Brown tells me my writing is good — and always interesting — and he makes me the same observation with the Rabbit — Respecting the Review — some mistake was made — it was but 10 £. Tell me if you have received the other 1 £ — it is left for you at Longman & Richards — Now fare my love to all — I ask Maria to write me — and not to defer it long — farewell — may God bless and protect you from all harm to happiness — we are [illegible] and faithfully [illegible] directs as I have written in this letter

Joseph Severn